

FOUR EASY STEPS FOR LANDLORDS

- 1) **Continue** - to contact ISD to schedule CoH inspections when existing tenants vacate and prior to re-occupying.
- 2) **Sit tight** - Unless your current tenants vacate your rental units (see above), you do not have to do anything else until you receive a Notification Letter from ISD, informing you of the program and requesting that you contact ISD to schedule your inspection.
- 3) **Schedule** - Once notified, you must contact ISD (either by phone, email, or in person) within 30 days to schedule your inspections.
- 4) **Notify** - Your tenants and arrange for full access to the units and building.

For Additional Information on Certificate of Habitability Inspection Requirements

please visit:

[http://www.chelseama.gov/Public_Documents/
ChelseaMA_Inspectional/COHpage](http://www.chelseama.gov/Public_Documents/ChelseaMA_Inspectional/COHpage)

Rental Inspection Program

617.466.4132

Housing Code Complaints

617.466.4132

Hours of Operation:

Monday 8am - 4pm

Tuesday 8am - 7pm

Wednesday 8am-4pm

Thursday 8am - 4pm

Friday 8am - 12 noon

Certificate of Habitability

Inspection Fees

Inspection Fees

Initial Inspection **\$50.00**

First Re-Inspection (if necessary) **Free**

*Additional Re-Inspection
(if necessary)* **\$50.00**

Penalties

Penalties for Non-Compliance

First Offense **\$50.00**

Second Offense **\$150.00**

Third Offense **\$300.00**

Subsequent Offenses **\$300.00/day**

Chronic Offender **Court Action**

Exemptions

*Any dwelling unit that is occupied by its owner is
exempt from obtaining a Certificate of Habitability.**

** Unit must be owners' primary residence and deed in owners'
name. Units owned by a Trust or LLC must be inspected regard-
less of occupancy status*

Email: coh@chelseama.gov



*This program is funded by the City of Chelsea and U.S. Dept. of HUD, with federal
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds administered by MA DHCD.*

City of Chelsea Inspectional Services Department

5-YEAR CERTIFICATE OF HABITABILITY RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION INITIATIVE



City of Chelsea
Inspectional Services Department
City Hall, 500 Broadway, Room 201
Chelsea, MA 02150

617.466.4132

CITY of CHELSEA 5-YEAR CERTIFICATE OF HABITABILITY RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION INITIATIVE

Program Overview

In 2014, the City of Chelsea amended an existing ordinance which calls for landlords of each rental unit in the City to 1) have their units inspected and 2) secure a Certificate of Habitability (CoH), prior to re-occupying the unit with new tenants. **The amended ordinance retains the original requirement for inspection and CoH on tenant turnover, but adds that units must be inspected at least every five years regardless of occupancy status**, meaning that regardless of whether the unit is occupied or not, the owner must contact the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) to have the unit inspected. Once inspected, if the unit passes, ISD will issue the CoH and the unit will not have to be re-inspected until the lesser of a) next turnover of tenants or b) five years.

Initial Target Areas (Green)



The purpose of the ordinance generally is to ensure that rental units in the City comply with the minimum standards called for in Chapter II of the State Sanitary Code. This code intends to protect the health, safety, and well being of the occupants of housing by ensuring that it is in **habitable condition**. Basically, the units must be suitable for occupants to live, sleep, cook or eat there.

In Chelsea, ISD and the Board of Health must enforce these basic requirements of Massachusetts General Laws.

“Protecting the health, safety, and welfare of Chelsea’s residents is a top priority... Proactive code enforcement is one means to effect positive change and ensure the minimum standards in the City’s largely rental housing stock...”

-Chelsea City Manager, Thomas G. Ambrosino

The amendment was necessary because not all rental units were being inspected despite high turnover rates. As a result of the City’s Targeted Enforcement activities, it was found that many properties, in the poorest condition and with the most serious health and safety issues, had not been inspected and did not have current CoHs.

Target Areas

The City’s initial target area for contacting owners is the Shurtleff-Bellingham neighborhood. Inspections have since expanded to the Addison-Orange neighborhood. Please see the map at the bottom left for area boundaries. The City intends to work a few streets at a time. The City expects to expand the program city-wide by 2017. Once an initial COH has been issued, re-inspection of rental units will then be set up on a five year cycle (or until next tenant turnover).



Program Benefits

- Educate owners and tenants on state and local housing codes.
- Provide owners with inspection report summarizing conditions of their properties.
- Ensures rental units meet minimum housing code requirements.
- Improves the quality of residential units in Chelsea.
- Increases neighborhood stability and improves the quality of life for all neighborhood residents.

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